



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Department of Toxic Substances Control

NEWS RELEASE

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Maureen F. Gorsen, Director

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Contact: Jeanne Garcia
(818) 717- 6573
Jgarcia1@dtsc.ca.gov

DTSC COMMENDS CALTRANS FOR USE OF NON TOXIC PAINT
SETTLEMENT REACHED WITH CALTRANS AND CONTRACTORS FOR 2007
VIOLATION OF STRIPPED TOXIC PAINT

SACRAMENTO - - Department of Toxic Substances Control Director Maureen F. Gorsen today commended Caltrans for its use of non-toxic yellow stripping paint as it continues to replace highway and freeway stripping that contains lead and chromium.

“As our economy and society focuses more on green chemistry, and the use of base materials that do no harm the environment, our state must lead the way. Caltrans has shown a commitment by undertaking a statewide effort to replace these toxic products with safe alternatives,” Gorsen added.

Caltrans is responsible for the care and maintenance of all state highways and freeways in California and has been using the metal-free paint for the past five years. The old yellow thermoplastic traffic striping on state highways contained lead, chromium and other heavy metals. When replaced, the old strips are managed as a hazardous waste. As strips are repainted, the toxic paint is removed and it is replaced with the metal-free paint that does not have to be managed as a hazardous waste and will not incur additional toxic management costs.

In January 2007, DTSC discovered seven containers of stripped paint by the roadside at Route 365 and Post Mile 27 in Lassen County near Doyle. On further investigation, it found Caltrans contractors Central Striping Service, Inc., and Baldwin Contracting Company, Inc., violated state hazardous waste laws by storing containers with shredded lead- and chromium-containing thermoplastic traffic striping material. Caltrans removed the drums that same month, after contact by DTSC.

As a result of this violation, DTSC recently entered into a settlement agreement with the contractors and Caltrans that specify payment of \$30,000 in fines (\$16,248 to be paid by Central Striping Service, \$9,245 by Baldwin Contracting and \$4,507 by Caltrans). Additionally Caltrans agreed to continue a rigorous, statewide hazardous waste compliance training effort for all its project engineers inspectors.

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FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control by phone at (800) 728-6942 or visit www.dtsc.ca.gov. To report illegal handling, discharge, or disposal of hazardous waste, call the Waste Alert Hotline at (800) 698-6942.

The mission of the Department of Toxic Substances Control is to provide the highest level of safety, and to protect public health and the environment from toxic harm.